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SUBJECT: AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT NEEDS KEY THEME OF SEPTEMBER
22 UN PLENARY MEETINGS

11. SUMMARY: Plenary meetings of the UN General Assembly book-ended September 22's high-level meeting on Africa's development needs. General Assembly President Miguel d'Escoto called upon Member States to fully live up to their commitments to African nations. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon insisted that the Millennium Development Goals were still achievable by 2015 should African governments and their development partners engage in more concerted efforts. After a scheme of roundtables in which the Secretary participated, the General Assembly adopted by consensus a political declaration on Africa's development needs, which called for the fulfillment of all official development assistance-related commitments. END SUMMARY

12. On September 22 UN General Assembly (UNGA) plenary meetings and four roundtable meetings focused on the topic "Africa's development needs: state of implementation of various commitments, challenges and the way forward." Throughout the day, 20 Heads of State and nine Heads of Government spoke out on a range of issues related to Africa's development, including debt relief, climate change, energy, and the global food crisis. Secretary Rice delivered the United States' views during one of the roundtable meetings, emphasizing the need for good governance and institutional reform as an essential component in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

13. D'Escoto opened the morning UNGA meeting by emphasizing that Africa had "amply" fulfilled its political, economic and social commitments, and called upon donors and the Bretton Woods institutions in return to fully honor their commitments to African nations. He noted that "unfair" conditions imposed by the Bretton Woods institutions were preventing the effective implementation of poverty reduction programs and eroding living conditions. He argued that the failure of the World Trade Organization's Doha trade talks demonstrated the limits of the "free-market doctrine." He blamed developed countries' agricultural subsidies for worsening the global food crisis.

14. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon expressed concern over the current state of implementation of the MDGs, which he reiterated were supposed to be achieved by 2015. However, he noted that given sufficient funding, which he determined to be \$72 billion per year, and with concerted action by African governments and their development partners, the MDGs for Africa remained achievable.

15. During the morning UNGA meeting, Tanzanian President Jakaya Mrisho Kiwete, speaking on behalf of the African Union, underscored Africa's commitment to address development challenges, but noted that Africa did not have the resources to pull itself out of "the poverty trap." He registered disappointment that many developed nations had failed to act upon what he termed their commitments to African nations, and called the obligation to help the needy in Africa a moral issue, not a question of charity.

¶6. French President Nicolas Sarkozy, speaking on behalf of the European Union (EU), reaffirmed the EU member states' commitment to delivering aid to Africa, noting that "the globalized world needs a developed Africa." "It would be a delusion," he continued, "to envision Europe's prosperity without working for the emergence of a major economic partner." Sarkozy encouraged donors and aid recipients to increase their coordination efforts.

¶7. During the evening session, the UNGA adopted by consent a political declaration on Africa's development needs, which emphasized that "eradicating poverty, particularly in Africa, is the greatest global challenge facing the world today." While the declaration contained no new commitments, it sought to reinvigorate existing commitments, such as those outlined in the Millennium Declaration. The declaration called for the fulfillment of all official development assistance-related commitments, and concluded that a coordinated, balanced and integrated approach at all levels was necessary to comprehensively address Africa's long-term development.
Khalilzad